AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1.   (Canceled)

2.   (Canceled)

3.   (Canceled)

4.   (Canceled)

5.   (Canceled)

6.   (Canceled)

7.   (Canceled)

8.   (Canceled)

9.   (Currently Amended) A method for printing postage indicia on labels comprising:

receiving, by a high speed mail item processing computer system, information associated with a plurality of mail pieces that require postage, wherein the information is used to determine the amount of the required postage for each of a plurality of postage indicia to be printed;

printing, by a printer, valid postage labels, wherein each of the valid postage labels comprise an image and a said plurality of postage indicium indicia corresponding to the required postage amount[[s]] on blank labels, wherein each of the postage indicia is associated with a particular one of the plurality of mail pieces, and wherein at least two of the postage indicia are not identical.; and

printing an image on the blank, wherein each of the postage indicia are associated with a mail piece that is designated for a particular recipient; and wherein the image is selected based upon one or more characteristics of the particular recipient.

10.   (Original) The method of claim 9 further comprising:

calculating the required postage amount from the information associated with the mail pieces.

11.   (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein the received information associated with the mail pieces comprises a required postage amount.

12.   (Canceled)

13.   (Canceled)

14.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 9 wherein the one or more characteristics of the recipient are selected from the group consisting of:

the recipient's age;

the recipient's sex;

the recipient's occupation; and

the recipient's location.

15.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9 wherein a single image is printed on a plurality of valid postage labels; and wherein the plurality of valid postage labels are printed with indicia representing at least two different postage amounts.

16.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9 wherein the postage indicia printed on a plurality of valid postage labels represent a single postage amount, and wherein the plurality of valid postage labels are printed with varying images.

17.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9 wherein the postage indicia and images printed on [[a]] the plurality of valid postage labels both vary.

18.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9 wherein the blank valid postage labels are printed on a printing medium comprise comprising a roll of blank labels that are printed in series, wherein the roll of printed valid postage labels appears to be a roll of postage stamps.

19.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9 wherein the ~~blank~~ valid postage labels are printed on a printing medium comprising ~~comprise~~ a sheet of blank labels, wherein the sheet of printed valid postage labels appear to be a sheet of postage stamps.

20.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9 wherein ~~the~~ a blank printing medium upon which the valid postage labels are printed comprise a serial number.

21.   (Original) The method of claim 20 further comprising:
verifying that the serial number is valid.

22.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 20 wherein the printed postage indicia includes the serial number.

23.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9 wherein the printing step comprises:
receiving label stock having a pre-printed serial number, the pre-printed serial number including a master serial number;
generating an indicium using with the master serial number, pre-printed serial number, and required request; and
printing the valid postage labels comprising the indicium on the label stock.

24.   (Currently Amended) A method for creating valid postage labels indicia for use on mail pieces, comprising:

monitoring the progress a location of mail pieces in a high-speed letter processing system;

calculating a postage amount due for each of the mail pieces;

creating valid postage labels indicia associated with each of the mail pieces before the mail pieces arrive at a location comprising a postage indicium applicator;

printing, by a printer on blank labels, the valid postage labels comprising postage indicia corresponding to the postage amount on blank labels calculated for use on the mail pieces and comprising images, wherein each of the postage indicia is associated with a particular one of the mail pieces, and wherein at least two of the valid postage labels indicia are not identical;

applying the valid postage labels indicia to the associated mail pieces; and

coordinating the operation of the postage indicium applicator and the location of the mail pieces a postage evidencing system that creates the indicia to ensure that the correct valid postage labels indicia are applied to each envelope.

25.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 24 further comprising:

monitoring the quality of the valid postage labels indicia to ensure that the proper postage valid postage labels were indicia was printed.

26.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 24 further comprising: monitoring the quality of the mail pieces to ensure that the valid postage labels indicia have been properly applied.

27.   (Original) The method of claim 24 further comprising:

monitoring the quality of the mail pieces to ensure that the postage indicia represents a proper postage amount.

28.   (Original) The method of claim 24 wherein the calculating step further comprises:

determining a destination for a mail piece; and

calculating the postage amount based upon the destination of the mail piece.

29.   (Original) The method of claim 24 wherein the calculating step further comprises:

determining a weight for a mail piece; and

calculating the postage amount based upon the weight of the mail piece.

30.   (Canceled)

31.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 24 wherein each of the postage indicia are associated with a mail piece that is designated for a particular recipient; and wherein the image for each valid postage labels indicium is selected based upon one or more characteristics of the associated particular recipient.

32.   (Original) The method of claim 31 wherein the one or more characteristics of the recipient are selected from the group consisting of:

the recipient's age;

the recipient's sex;

the recipient's occupation; and

the recipient's location.

33.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 24 wherein the blank labels comprise a roll of blank labels that are printed in series.

34.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 24 wherein the blank labels comprise a sheet of blank labels.

35.   (Canceled)

36.   (Original) The method of claim 24 wherein the blank labels comprise a serial number.

37.   (Original) The method of claim 36 further comprising:

verifying that the serial number is valid.

38.   (Original) The method of claim 36 wherein printed postage indicia includes the serial number.

39.   (Original) The method of claim 24 wherein the printing step further comprises:

receiving label stock having a pre-printed serial number, the pre-printed serial number including a master serial number;

generating postage indicia using the master serial number, pre-printed serial number, and required request; and

printing the postage indicia on the label stock.

40.   (New) The method of claim 24 further comprising:

coordinating the location of the mail pieces and the operation of the postage indicium applicator and a postage evidencing system that creates the valid postage labels to ensure that the correct valid postage labels are applied to each mail piece.

41.   (New) The method of claim 24 wherein each of the images is selected based on recipient characteristics of the particular one of the mail pieces.

42.   (New) A method comprising:

creating a machine generated postage stamp, by a high speed mail item computer processing system, said creating including:

receiving, by the high speed mail item computer processing system, information associated with each of a plurality of mail pieces, wherein the high speed mail item computer processing system determines a postage amount for each postage indicia to be printed based on the information; and

printing, by a printer, said machine generated postage stamp including a postage indicium and an image, wherein the postage indicium is associated with a particular one of the plurality of mail pieces and bears the determined postage amount, and wherein the image is selected based on characteristics of a recipient of the particular one of the plurality of mail pieces; and

affixing the machine generated postage stamp to the mail pieces to provide mail pieces processed by the high speed mail item computer processing system which appear to have been prepared by hand.

43.   (New) The method of claim 42 wherein at least two of the machine generated postage stamp bear different images and different postage amounts.